

Dr. Lee served our nation as Director of Health Services in the Office of Technical Cooperation and Research, part of the Department of State's Agency for International Development, from 1963 to 1965. He was a strong advocate for Medicare, and for this he was vilified by the AMA and others as a socialist.

He served as Assistant Secretary for Health and Scientific Affairs in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare from 1965 to 1969. During this time, he worked directly with President Johnson and helped implement the newly passed Medicare program, integrating many of the hospitals in our country as mandated by the Medicare legislation.

From 1969 to 1972, Dr. Lee was UCSF's third Chancellor, and founded what became the Philip R. Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies. He worked closely with UCSF's Black Caucus to end unequal pay and other discriminatory practices.

Dr. Lee was Chairman of the Physician Payment Review Commission in Congress from 1986 to 1993 and then served in the Clinton administration as Assistant Secretary for Health in the Department of Health and Human Services, from 1993 to 1997.

Dr. Lee had a profound impact on our country and its healthcare system. He was a friend and beloved mentor to me and hundreds of others, and a wise and compassionate man. He had a sharp wit, a great laugh, and always a twinkle in his bright blue eyes. He will be missed by everyone who had the good fortune to know him, and he will be honored for generations to come for the enormous influence he had on the delivery of medicine in the United States.

Madam Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life and work of Philip Randolph Lee, and in extending our condolences to his wife, Dr. Roz Diane Lasker, and his entire family. He was as humble as he was extraordinary. He made us a better and stronger nation and his life and work will sustain us and inspire us for generations to come.

HONORING SOPHIE HOMONOFF AS IOWAN OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Sophie Homonoff, Director of Education at the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines, as our Iowan of the Week for the week of October 2, 2020.

Sophie is a mother, a lifelong teacher, and loves working with children. Originally from Des Moines, Sophie once attended the schools she now leads. When she and her family moved back to the area in 2012, she dedicated herself to volunteering at the Federation and eventually became its leader on their educational efforts. She recognized what a Jewish education had given to her as a kid and wanted to give that experience to others.

Like most educators, Sophie juggles an incredible amount at work. She oversees Gan Shalom Preschool which serves young children from local Jewish and non-Jewish families five days per week. She runs the religious school, Beit Sefer Shalom, for pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students. Sophie's team also offers two summer camps—one for little kids and one catered to school-aged children—so they have somewhere fun, safe, and engaging to spend time outside the classroom. Through their collective efforts, Sophie and her team serve more than 200 children each year.

In addition to schools and camps, Sophie directs several programs to help young Iowans further grow in their faith and foster greater understanding in the community. Nearly eight years ago she launched the Madrichim program, a teenage leadership opportunity for 7th through 12th graders to serve as paid student aids, which grew to two dozen participants last year. Madrichim gain a stronger sense of identity and responsibility, learn as they teach and mentor younger children and those with special needs, and deepen ties within their congregation.

A more recent addition is the Student-to-Student pilot project, where high school stu-

dents from the Federation visit another high school, middle school, or religious institution classroom to educate others about Judaism in a 45-minute session. With same-aged peers speaking to one another about their experiences and asking questions in a safe environment, Sophie has found the program to increase knowledge and awareness while decreasing stereotypes and prejudice. She and her students are working on a video version of the program with Zoom Q&A so it may continue during the pandemic and expand to schools outside of central Iowa.

This year COVID-19 has presented one significant challenge after another for families and schools. Sophie has guided her team through various adaptations in recent months so classroom and extracurricular activities can continue in a safe, effective manner for as many students as possible. They started summer camp online and eventually transitioned the entire program outdoors, rotating participants so kids could gather and play safely. For students engaged in online learning while their parents are at work, the Federation's education staff welcomed them to the facility to help them through the school day. They provide snacks, lunches, and care from teachers to navigate virtual education. When they get breaks the students can play outside and see friends, so they don't feel as isolated. Sophie's team also added an online component to the religious school to make sure no children fell behind. They're providing families balance and security when so much feels uncertain.

I greatly admire people like Sophie who invest so thoughtfully in our children and our communities. Her leadership and hard work are creating strong ties across Des Moines during a time when we all must work together to build a more tolerant, inclusive, and empathetic future for all our neighbors. If you ask her what her focus is, Sophie will tell you it's to follow the Federation's mission of supporting and connecting the community and to make sure everyone is taken care of. You can see that focus in everything she does. Those who know Sophie say she doesn't receive nearly enough recognition for all the hard work she puts in to make the community stronger. It's my honor to celebrate her many contributions and name her our Iowan of the Week.